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International Business/International Marketing

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CREATING AN INTRANET PORTAL FOR THE STRATEGY OF HALTON GROUP

Bachelor's Thesis 2009

ABSTRACT

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VAINIO TAINA	Creating an intranet portal for the strategy of Halton Group
Bachelor's Thesis	56 pages + 3 appendices
Supervisor	Kai Koski
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This applied thesis deals with Halton Group's new strategy and its communication to the company's employees. In this study organisational communication and internal marketing are seen as the key elements behind the successful implementation of a company strategy, and therefore discussed mainly from the point of view of communicating the strategy.

The purpose of this thesis was to facilitate Halton Group's internal communication of the strategy. Creating an intranet portal that would act as a supportive means of communication was the functional part of this thesis. The main objective was to create an online storehouse of information that would be globally available for all Halton's employees.

The empirical data was gathered by studying the company's new strategy material and the company intranet, and from conversations with the company's employees. Understanding of the company and its strategy was greatly supported by personal work experience from two training periods at Halton. Theoretical framework was built on existing theories of strategy, organisational communication, and internal marketing.

Effective communication of the strategy has been seen as an important part of successful strategy implementation at Halton Group. The company has successfully started to implement the new strategy and the portal for strategy has come in useful.

TIIVISTELMÄ

KYMENLAAKSON AMMATTIKORKEAKOULU

International Business/International Marketing

VAINIO TAINA	Strategiaportaalin luominen Halton konsernin intranet-sivustoon
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Tämä toiminnallinen opinnäytetyö käsittelee Halton konsernin uutta strategiaa ja yrityksen työntekijöille kohdennettua strategiaviestintää. Tässä tutkimuksessa yritysviestintä ja sisäinen markkinointi nähdään onnistuneen strategiaviestinnän kulmakivinä, ja täten niitä käsitellään enimmäkseen strategiaviestinnän näkökulmasta.

Tämän opinnäytetyön tarkoituksena oli tukea Halton konsernin sisäistä strategiaviestintää. Opinnäytetyön toiminnallisena osuutena oli luoda strategiaportaali, joka toimisi yrityksen muuta strategiaviestintää tukevana välineenä. Pääasiallinen tavoite oli luoda intranettiin strategiatietopankki, joka olisi koko konsernin henkilöstön käytössä ja helposti saatavilla.

Empiirinen tieto kerättiin tutustumalla yrityksen uuteen strategiaan, strategiamateriaaleihin ja intranet-sivustoon, sekä keskustelemalla yrityksen henkilökunnan kanssa. Henkilökohtainen työkokemus kahdesta työharjoittelusta Haltonilla tuki suuresti yrityksen ja sen strategian ymmärtämistä. Teoreettinen viitekehys pohjautuu olemassa oleviin teorioihin strategiasta, yritysviestinnästä ja sisäisestä markkinoinnista.

Haltonilla on ymmärretty tehokkaan strategiaviestinnän merkitys yritysstrategian tuloksellisen toteuttamisen mahdollistajana. Yritys on onnistuneesti alkanut toteuttaa uutta strategiaansa, ja strategiaportaali on osoittautunut hyödylliseksi strategiaviestinnän välineeksi.

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Writing this thesis has been very time-consuming, and that time was taken from my family. In order to graduate earlier I decided to complete the thesis during the autumn term. That meant writing during the evenings, and spending less time with my children. I am most grateful to my family for being unselfish and giving me the time and privacy to concentrate on writing. Without their support I would not have made it. Jonna, Mikko, Pekka, and Janne – thank you for understanding mum's long evenings by the computer.

Last but not least I want to thank my supervisor Kai Koski for his constructive comments, and my dear friend Aulikki for giving me the keys to success.

Koria, 6th November 2009

Taina Vainio

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

This is an applied thesis commissioned by Halton Group, a company that specialises in products and solutions for indoor environments.

The topic was proposed in spring 2009 by Anu Korhonen, the Brand and Communications Manager of Halton Group. The communication of the company's new strategy was to be facilitated by creating a portal for strategy to the company intranet. The idea seemed very interesting and an agreement was made of this being the thesis topic.

Having work experience from carrying out both practical trainings at Halton supported the thesis writing process. The training and the thesis were connected in a meaningful way that supported learning. Applied thesis seemed like the most suitable way of demonstrating the competence in this case, as it combines theoretical knowledge with practical skills thereby producing a solution for the company needs. The practical part of this thesis was carried out in June and July 2009.

This thesis describes the problem of efficient internal communication of a strategy, and creates a solution in the form of designing and implementing an intranet portal for strategy.

1.2 Applied thesis

An applied thesis aims to create hands-on directions, guidance, or rationalised operations on the professional field. The method of implementation can be e.g. a website, a book, a CD, an organised event, or a handbook for professional use. Applied theses in Universities of Applied Sciences combine practical implementation and scientific reporting with emphasis on practical solutions for company problems. An applied thesis should originate from working life; a commissioned thesis supports also the author's professional growth. The thesis should be practical and down-to-earth, carried out with an exploratory attitude, and demonstrating the

author's knowledge and skills on required level. (Vilkka & Airaksinen 2003, 9-10, 16-18.)

1.3 The objectives of the thesis

Halton Group has recently launched a new strategy, and the objective of this thesis is to facilitate the company in its internal communication of the strategy. An intranet portal of strategy is to be created the way it will act as a supporting means of communication, being a database where all the relevant information about the new company strategy can be found.

Several communication channels are used at Halton for communicating the strategy with the employees. The portal's objective is to become an online storehouse of information where all the employees have easy access. After taking part in various types of strategy briefings, everyone can revise the information whenever it suits them the best. The portal should include all the material from training and presentations, video clips, strategy deals made by each team, and all the latest information about the strategy. The goal is to make the portal easy and inviting to use for everyone.

The personal objectives are to learn as much as possible about company strategies and corporate communications, and in the practical part of this thesis to bridge the gap between the knowledge and the practice.

1.4 Halton Group

1.4.1 Halton from 1969 to 2009 – forty years of expertise

Halton is a family-owned Finnish company which today specialises in indoor climate solutions. The company was established in Kausala in 1969 by Seppo Halttunen, who had a vision of an international company with its own products, R&D, manufacturing, and good reputation among customers. In the beginning the company was operating in shop furnishings business in the domestic market, but already then one of Halton's main targets was to become international. During the first decade heavy investments were made in research and development which lead to breakthrough products and increase in sales. (Halton 2009a.)

The domestic shop furnishing operations were sold in the 1980's and new opportunities were seen in new technologies. Halton faced rapid international growth throughout the first decades; sales offices, representative offices, and production plants were established in the USA, Europe, and Asia. Through acquisitions of Finnish and foreign companies Halton Group brought new expertise to the company and strengthened its international market position. Intensive investment in advanced product development was the key to Halton's success as a technological pacesetter and a market leader. (Halton 2009a.)

Since its foundation Halton has grown from a small national company to a leading global company in indoor climate technology. Today Halton operates in 21 countries around the world having annual sales of 171M€ and 1200 employees. (Halton 2009b.)

Halton Group's competitiveness is based on customer focused products and solutions for a selected range of applications. Technologically and locally focused operations backed with international expansion have been the driving forces of the company. Today Halton is a global supplier of products and solutions for indoor environment. Advanced innovation centres on three continents enable comprehensive testing of innovations as well as solutions tailored for customer needs. The company offers business-enhancing

products, systems and services for comfortable, energy efficient and safe environments for customers who value the wellbeing of people. Halton is involved from target setting to facility use, and focuses on creating positive indoor environment experiences for people. Halton's mission is to enable wellbeing in indoor environments. (Halton 2009b.)

1.4.2 Organisational structure of the company

Halton organisation, as illustrated in Figure 1, is a combination of Strategic Business Areas (SBAs), Regions, and Customer Relationship Units (CRUs).

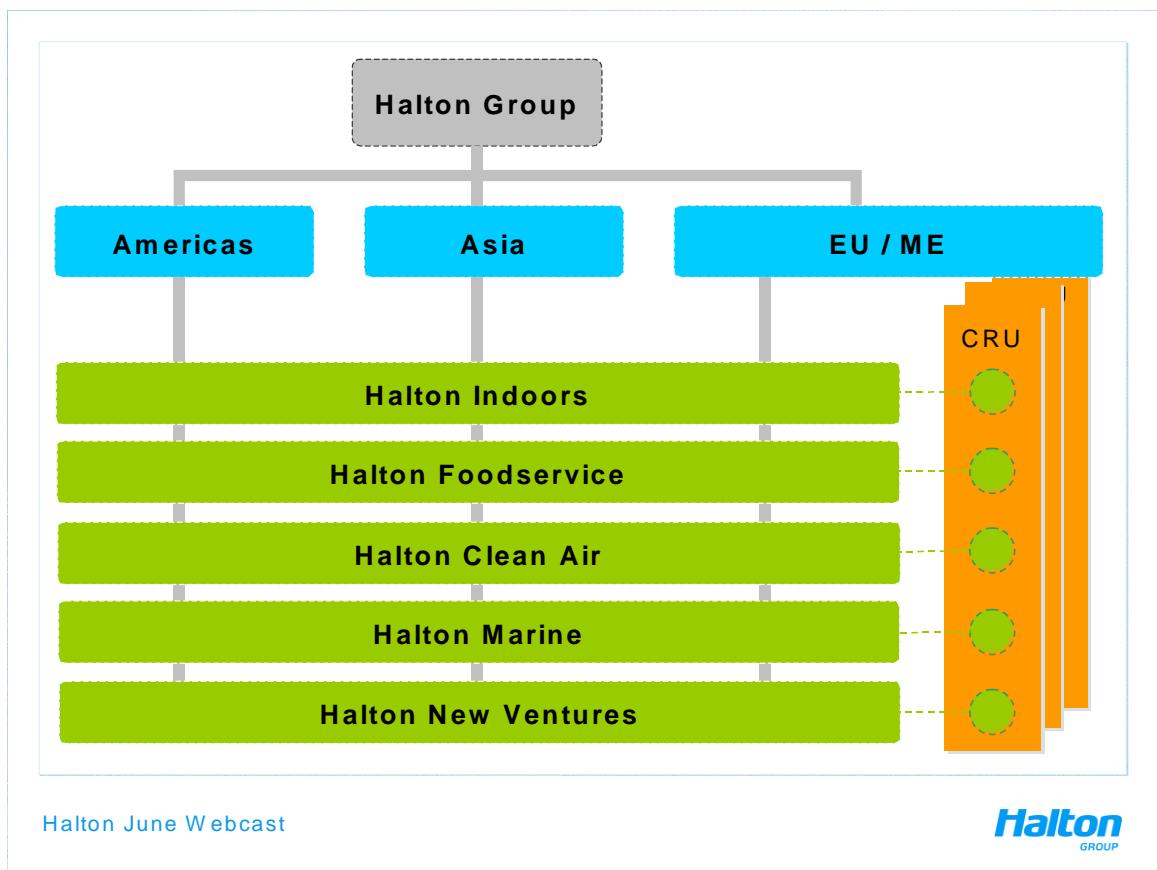


Figure 1 Halton Group organisation chart (Halton 2009c)

Halton Group consists of five Strategic Business Areas that are each responsible for their global strategy and development: Halton Clean Air, Halton Foodservice, Halton Indoors, Halton Marine and Halton New Ventures. (Halton 2009c.)

All strategic business areas offer products and solutions for the indoor environment, each concentrating on their own special field. Halton Indoors focuses on public and commercial buildings, such as offices, hotels, and health care facilities. Halton Foodservice has special expertise in the field of commercial kitchens and restaurants. Halton Marine's special fields are ventilation, airflow management, and fire safety in the ship building industry, oil and gas industries, and navy segments. Halton Clean Air offers air cleaning solutions for commercial and public buildings, homes, and pulp, paper, and oil industries. Halton New Ventures consists of three units; Halton Technology Centre, Halton Solutions, and New Concepts and Business Models. This strategic business area concentrates on innovations, indoor environment management solutions and problem solving. Each SBA is responsible for their own business, including sales. Local sales are organised in good cooperation with Halton CRUs. The CRUs are responsible for overall Halton activities, local administration and coordination of key customer sales. (Halton 2009b.)

Halton operates in three regions: Europe & the Middle East, the Americas, and Asia. The regional organisation's role is to support the SBA growth and to manage operations regionally. Regions are responsible for localising global SBA strategies, and providing regional administrative support. They also coordinate the sharing of resources to increase productivity. Regional fine-tuning of SBA strategies helps in achieving higher sales based on country codes and customer preferences. (Halton 2009c.)

2 STRATEGY

2.1 The concept of strategy

Historically the concept of strategy has been around for millennia. The word can be used smoothly in businesses, and there have been studies about the concept for decades. But what does it really mean?

It would seem that it is very difficult to find a single and right definition of strategy, as it is such a broad and indefinite topic. The word strategy has been borrowed from classical Greece's military and adapted for business use. In both purposes strategy is a bridge between the guidelines and the course of action. (Karlöf 2004, 19.) In military use the most common definition for strategy is that the objective of strategy is to win the war. On the other hand, in the 2nd century BC a Chinese military strategist Sun Tzu stated that strategy's objective is to avoid the war. (Kamensky 2002, 16.) Whichever way you look at it, strategy is about survival; in war, doing business, on sports field or during life in general.

Thompson (2001, 10) defines strategy to be the setting of clear direction for the organisation by an undivided set of plans in order to achieve long term organisational goals. This definition is based on the core idea of strategy being a plan for the future. According to Porter (1996) *strategy rests on unique activities*, which means forming a unique and valuable position involving a different set of activities. He also states that strategy is about being different. Thus Porter defines strategy as a tool for achieving a superior position in the competition. Karlöf (2004, 19) argues that strategy means long-span and comprehensive business skills; thereby being more extensive and wide-ranging than operations management. He defines strategy as present actions and decisions for ensuring future success and exploiting coming possibilities. Kilpinen (2008, 121) mentions that there is no way a company would get any better results than its competitors, if it always does the same things and in the same way as others. He defines strategy as business creativity.

Every company operates on a set of assumptions about what business it is in, what are the goals, who are the customers and what do they value, and how are the results defined. Strategy applies these assumptions into performance aiming to achieve the desired results in an unpredictable environment. (Drucker 1999, 43.)

According to Porter (1996) continuous benchmarking is a must in achieving the best practices. In order to stay ahead of their rivals, companies must respond rapidly to the changes in the market and the competition. Strategy and operational effectiveness are essential with the aim of performing well, but they work differently. Operational effectiveness is all about carrying out similar activities better than the competitors do, whereas strategic positioning aims at carrying out similar activities in different ways or performing different activities than rivals do. Operational effectiveness aims to achieve excellence in individual activities or functions, and strategy involves the whole system of activities combining them. The competitive advantage of a strategy comes from the way the activities fit and reinforce each other. The fit keeps the imitators out by creating a chain which is as strong as its strongest link.

In good strategies the activities complement one another creating real economic value. For example the cost of one activity becomes lower due to the way some other activities are performed. One of the most important functions of a clear and communicated strategy is to guide the employees in making the choices that arise in their day-to-day work. Strategy defines the company's unique position, makes clear trade-offs and tightens the fit. Strategy's enemies are compromising and distraction, as strategy demands discipline and continuity. (Porter 1996.)

2.2 Three levels of organisational strategies

Multiple business firms have three levels of organisational strategy: corporate strategy, business strategy, and functional strategy. A convenient way of classifying levels of strategy is to view the corporate strategy as responsible for market definition, the business strategy as responsible for

market navigation, and the functional strategy as the foundation that supports both of these. (Dessler 1999, 12-13.) Company strategies can also be categorised by the level of the organisation addressed by the strategy. Corporate strategies involve the top management and handle issues that concern the entire organisation. Business strategies deal with major business units and are generally developed by the upper and middle level managers. Functional strategies concern the lower level management and deal with the strategies for the major organisational functions that are considered relevant for supporting the business and corporate strategies. (Helms 2006.)

2.2.1 Corporate strategy

In a broad sense, the corporate strategy identifies the portfolio of businesses that form the organisation and the ways in which these businesses relate to each other. Corporate strategy defines the long-term direction of the company explaining how the firm intends to compete on a broad scale. It deals with the plans for the entire organisation. Corporate strategy is an interactive and dynamic process; a part of company's strategic management. (Thompson 2001, 10-15.) Corporate strategy defines the markets and the businesses in which a company will operate. It usually defines the company's mission and vision, saying what the company does, why it exists, and what it is intended to become. Corporate strategy is a pattern of decisions in a company that determines its goals, creates the plans for achieving those goals, and defines what kind of organisation it is at the moment and intends to be in the future. Corporate strategy usually applies to the whole enterprise. (Foss 1997, 52.)

2.2.2 Business strategy

Business strategy is also known as the competitive strategy. It identifies how to build and strengthen the company's long term competitive position in the marketplace. Business strategy clarifies the competitive advantage of the company through benchmarking. Competitive strategy depends on the

company's capabilities, strengths, and weaknesses in relation to the market characteristics and the capabilities, strengths, and weaknesses of its competitors. Business strategy is a determination of how a company will compete in its business and position itself in the competition. Business strategy defines the choices of products, services, and markets of individual businesses within the firm. (Foss 1997, 52.)

In large organisations the individual business units may be combined to form strategic business units that are responsible for their own profits and losses. Each strategic business unit usually has individual competitors and own unique strategy. Business strategies are concerned with matching their activities with the overall goals of corporate strategy, and creating competitive advantage to the other businesses in their industry. Business strategies commonly involve decisions regarding particular product lines and individual products within them, or relationships between different products. (Helms 2006.)

2.2.3 Functional strategy

Functional strategies identify the basic courses of action that each of the business' departments will conduct in order to help the business to reach its competitive goals. Functional strategies can include e.g. operations strategy, financial strategy, new product development strategy, and marketing strategy. A functional strategy describes how that business function will deliver on its responsibilities within the business strategy. Functional strategies define what those business functions must be able to do, and how will they do it – especially in the light of what the other business functions are doing. (Foss 1997, 54.)

Functional strategies act as a game plan for running a particular function within the business, adding detail and providing support to the overall business strategy. The lower-level managers are most directly involved with the implementation of functional strategies. Functional strategies have a shorter time orientation than either business or corporate strategies. Accountability is thereby easiest to establish with functional strategies,

because the results of actions occur sooner than is possible at other levels of the strategy. (Helms 2006.)

2.3 Five Ps for strategy

Mintzberg et al. (1998, 9) argue that people use strategy in several different ways. They have defined the five P's for strategy: plan, pattern, position, perspective, and ploy. According to Mintzberg strategy can be a company's *plan* for the future; a means of getting from here to there. In that meaning, strategy is looking ahead. Strategy can also be a *pattern* in actions over time, looking at consistency in past behaviour. For example, a company that continuously markets the most expensive products is using high-end strategy. Strategy is also a *position* and thus reflects decisions to offer particular products in particular markets. As a position, strategy looks to the external marketplace and the point where the product meets the customer, determining particular products in particular markets. In contrast to that, being a *perspective* strategy defines the organisation's way of doing things; communicates vision and direction looking inside the organisation. Strategy can also be used as a *ploy*; a tactic that intends to outwit the competitors. (Mintzberg et al. 1998, 9-21.)

However, Mintzberg states that strategies transform over time as intentions clash into the changing reality. A company may have a plan to begin with (intended strategy). The plan may, however, be changed in the course of time. Parts of the plan may become redundant (unrealised strategy) when other parts become realised (deliberate strategy). New innovations or changes in the environment may lead the company to new areas that were not part of the plan (emergent strategy). Together the deliberate and emergent strategies form the company's realised strategy, as illustrated in Figure 2. Strategies can thus form as well as be formulated. (Mintzberg 1989, 29-31.)

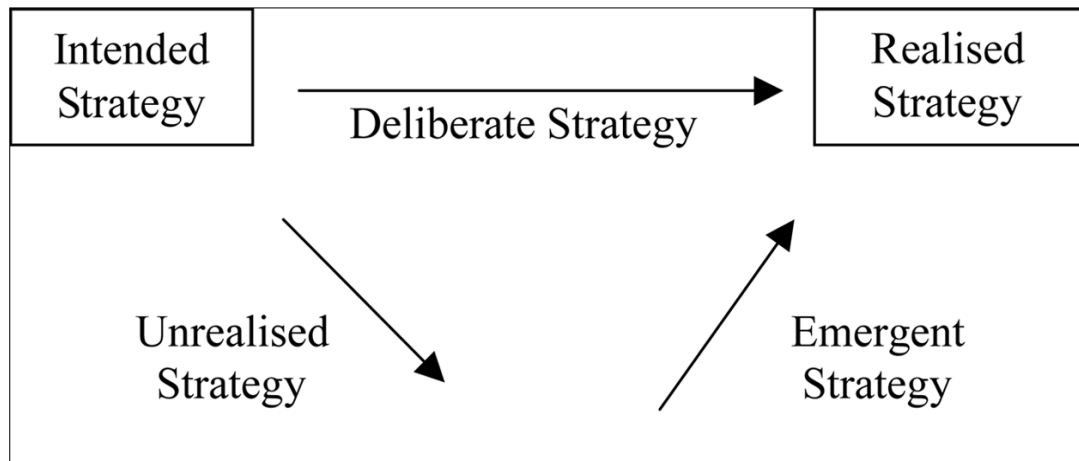


Figure 2 Realised strategy by Mintzberg (1989)

Only a few strategies can be either purely deliberate or purely emergent. Deliberate strategies are based on predicting the future and emergent strategies come from reacting to unexpected matters. Many strategies mix these in some way; broad outlines of strategy can be deliberate and details are allowed to emerge within them. These can also be called umbrella strategies. Good strategies need both deliberate control and emergent learning. (Mintzberg 1994, 27.)

2.4 Creating a strategy from core capabilities

The strategy process is viewed by more and more companies as a process that identifies and develops the core capabilities of the company to create added value for selected customers. The application of core capabilities as a key component of strategy is quite new. Companies that place core capabilities at the centre of their strategic resources are focusing on their unique, hard-to-copy core capabilities rather than on products or markets. The scope of their strategy is determined by their strategic vision, and their resources are defined in terms of capabilities they have developed for adding value for their customers. Strategies are often formulated based on questions like “What business are we in?” and “What businesses should we be in?” Paying attention instead to those core capabilities that are needed to

develop for taking advantage of future changes is a relatively new approach to strategy formulation. (Long & Vickers-Koch 1995.)

Focusing on the customers as the experts of value, repositions attention to the cross-functional processes that run through the company in order to meet the customer expectations. This broadens companies' perspectives and makes them think differently about how they add value. Their skills and processes are evaluated on the basis of the usefulness to the customer and the competitive advantage they create. The core capabilities are a foundation for building competitive advantage in the future as well. (Long & Vickers-Koch 1995.)

When defining company's core capabilities it is important to understand the difference between various types of capabilities. A capability is always a combination of different competencies and processes within a company. The *threshold capabilities* are necessary for the company for just being in the game. These include skills and systems that are necessary for doing business in the company's industry, and services that support the company's internal customers, e.g. human resources and accounting skills. These capabilities don't usually create real competitive advantage, though using them well can make a difference in the company's success. Core capabilities are the ones the company relies on for its competitive advantage. The processes and competencies that provide competitive edge in the present situation can be called the *critical core capabilities*. The ones that will provide tomorrow's competitive advantage are the *cutting edge core capabilities*. (Long & Vickers-Koch 1995.)

Exploring the value chain is critical when a company wants to become capability based. It is important to find the specific points in the value chain where the margin between the added value and the cost of adding it is the greatest. The search helps in identifying the skills or technology that gives the company an advantage at these points and defining the critical capabilities for meeting the customer needs. (Long & Vickers-Koch 1995.)

Finding the core capabilities, the points in the value chain where the company has superior technology or skills, doesn't necessarily mean that other activities should be subcontracted to others who can do them better. Value can be added throughout the value chain by linking the core competencies together with other processes. Thereby those other activities can become more effective – which will influence the total amount of added value. Focusing on adding value through processes increases the breakdown of functional barriers and development of more innovative ways of applying the core capabilities across different units and functions. The company thereby achieves better control over its critical chains and improves the strategic processes. (Long & Vickers-Koch 1995.)

Capability based companies highlight practices and processes in their strategies rather than existing product categories and market segments. They seek to create maximum value by developing their products and services from the core capabilities they already have developed. Capability based companies are looking beyond the activities; they are looking for the underlying skills that help them to execute certain activities better than their competitors. This deeper view supports innovative thinking and helps them to see new and different appliances of their hidden capabilities. (Long & Vickers-Koch 1995.)

CORE COMPETENCIES	NEW	What are the new core competencies we need to build to protect and expand our current markets ?	What kind of new core competencies we need to build in order to become involved in the most interesting markets of the future ?
	EXISTING	What possibilities we have for improving our current market position by using our current core competencies better?	How can we enter new markets by combining our current core competencies in new ways?
		EXISTING	NEW
		MARKETS	

Figure 3 Market-core competence matrix (based on Lehtonen 2002, 68)

Finding a balance between company's internal capabilities and its external opportunities can be achieved at several levels. This is illustrated in Figure 3. At the first level the company can scan the existing core capabilities and market segments to identify new opportunities, and create new products or services for unfilled areas in those market segments. Then, the company can analyse existing market segments in order to find out what new core capabilities could be developed and thereby protect the position in those existing markets. At the third level the company can create new products and services combining existing core capabilities for satisfying new market segments. On the highest level of innovation the company can trace the most promising new market segments, and try to develop new core capabilities to enter those markets. (Lehtonen 2002, 68.)

Including key line managers/employees in the process provides an important source of information for profiling company's strategic targets. Helping employees understand the company's core capabilities helps them to understand its purpose and direction. Everyone in the company can then take part in developing the core capabilities, and it doesn't remain a responsibility of just a few. According to Hamel (2001) each employee should have the same potential to influence the company's future as the managers in highest positions do.

Core capabilities, at any level, are the most crucial and unique resources a company holds. They are companies' greatest sources of inherent strength. Core capabilities are difficult to copy by e.g. competitors as their grounds lay in the skills, knowledge, and processes developed in the course of time into practical combinations. They are also difficult to change unexpectedly. Therefore it is very important for a company to understand and determine the core capabilities in relation to its market opportunities.

2.5 Halton's strategy

The world is changing faster than ever. In order to survive companies must be change oriented – instead of just passively adjusting to the changes that happen in the market. In spring 2009 Halton created a new strategy for the future, taking into account the megatrends that affect Halton's industry. Megatrends are the forces in societal development that will affect all areas of life for many years to come. They are the forces defining the present and the future world – the knowledge we have about our future. Globalisation, developing technology, economic growth and increasing standard of living, climate change, demographic changes, and acceleration of economic cycles were considered the most important megatrends having influence on Halton's business and its new strategy. (Halton 2009d.)

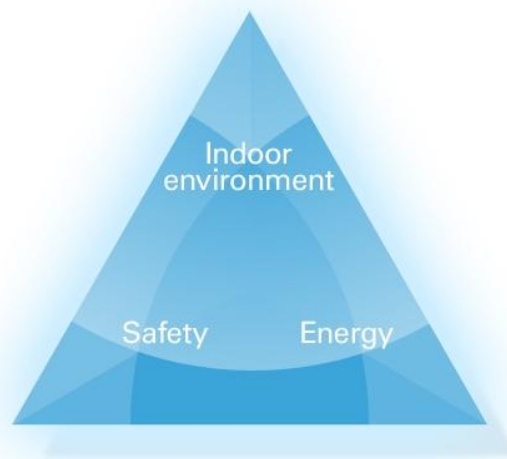


Figure 4 Halton's scope triangle (Halton 2009d.)

As a part of the new strategy, Halton's scope was expanded from the indoor climate to the indoor environment quality, energy efficiency, and safety (Figure 4). Focusing on the whole indoor environment creates competitive advantage for the company and adds value for the various customer segments. Indoor environment is more than indoor air; it is about thermal comfort, air quality, acoustics, lighting, and ergonomics. Safety solutions are globally a very attractive and large market providing security for people and facilities and thereby creating peace of mind. Halton has successfully introduced ventilation fire safety solutions for various types of buildings, and will continue developing new products and solutions under the Halton brand

to improve their customers' safety. Building regulations and environmentally responsible attitudes are also creating more market opportunities for sustainable buildings. Halton's solutions are an important competitive advantage combining energy efficiency and the good indoor environment. (Halton 2009d.)

Halton is a specialist that provides solutions for very specific market segments. Halton aims to understand their customers' business and create trust, deep relationships, and long term partnerships with them. Halton is committed to adding value for their customers by being innovative, productive, and easy to do business with. One of the most important elements in Halton's strategy is the employees. At Halton it has been understood, that people make the company what it is and what it will be in the future. Creating an environment where people can maintain commitment and motivation is a necessity for the company success; when people are happy in their work they are also more productive.

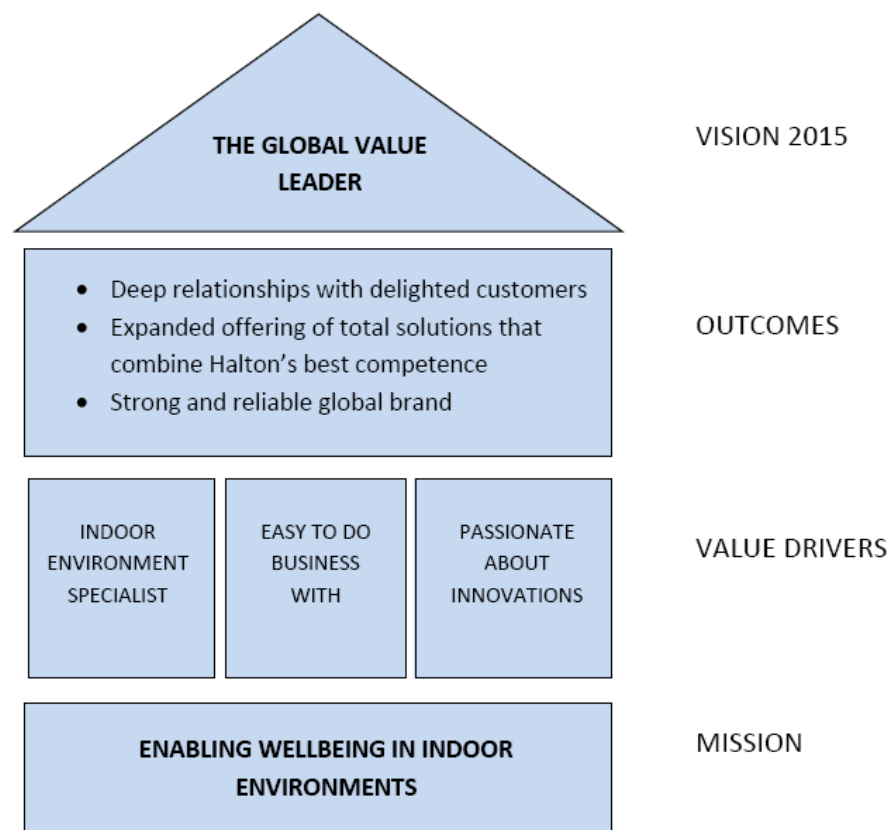


Figure 5 Basic elements of Halton's strategy 2015

Halton's strategy is highly based on their core capabilities and meeting customer expectations. The strategy can be seen like a cluster of blocks that together create a steady and solid building, as shown in figure 5. Everything is based on the company mission, enabling wellbeing in indoor environments. Value drivers are the most important factors about Halton that add value to their customers and create competitive advantage. People at Halton are specialists who are passionate about innovations and adding value, and Halton is easy to do business with on every level (the whole organisation and an individual employee). This leads to positive outcomes in forms of good customer relationships, increasing number of products and solutions that speak for Halton's good quality, and globally recognised strong and reliable Halton brand. In 2015 Halton, according to the company vision, will be a global value leader in the markets of indoor environments.

3 ORGANISATIONAL COMMUNICATION

3.1 Communication process

The word communication originates from the Latin word *communicare*, make together. Communication in its simplest form means passing messages between a sender and a receiver. (Åberg 1996, 14.)

The starting point for the communication process is the sender's objective: a certain effect is desired to be achieved on the receiver's mind. The basic element for communication is the sender's ability to communicate. This ability includes first of all understanding the target audience and secondly the ability to formulate and pass the message the way it reaches the target audience. Thereby the target audience defines what is said and where in order to reach the objective of communication. (Vuokko 2002, 28-29.)

According to West & Turner (2007, 12-13) an interactional model of communication process was introduced in 1954 by Wilbur Schramm (illustrated in Figure 6). The model emphasizes communication going in two directions; from sender to receiver and vice versa, suggesting that communication is an ongoing process. This interactional view points up a person's role as both the sender and the receiver during the communication process. Feedback is an important component of the interactional model. It can be a verbal or nonverbal and intentional or unintentional response to a message. Feedback shows to what extent the meaning of the message has been understood by the receiver (Senge 1990, 424.)

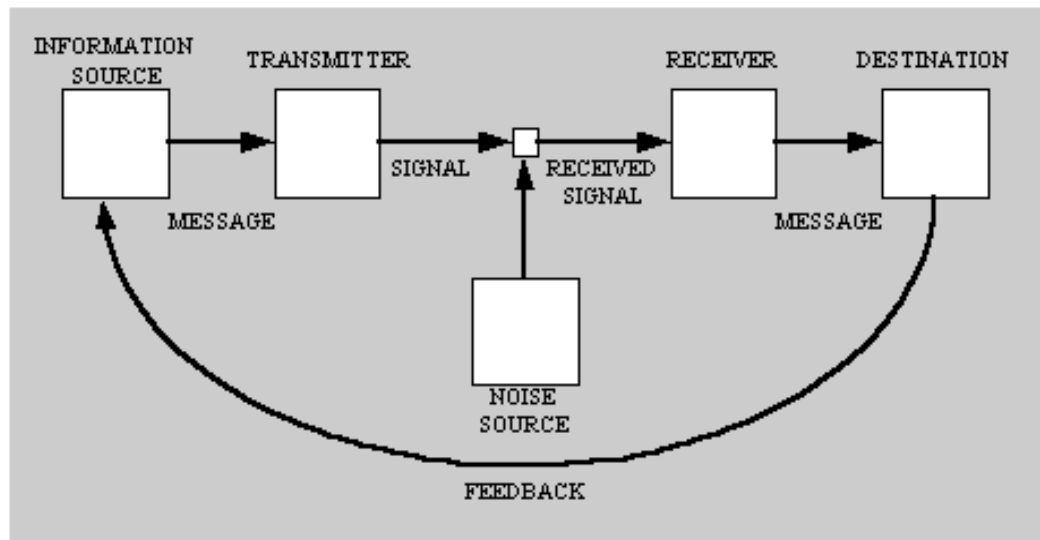


Figure 6 The interactional communication process (Based on West & Turner 2007)

According to this model communication is a two-way process where thoughts and ideas are exchanged and moved forward towards a mutually accepted direction. In the process information is encoded (i.e. made understandable for the other party) and passed on by a sender to a receiver via a channel/medium. The receiver then decodes the message (i.e. interprets what the sender meant to say) and gives feedback to the sender. Encoding and decoding the message is highly affected by personal experience. Interpreting the message includes not only words but also tones and gestures that are not expressed verbally, which can end in misreading of the message. (Schramm & Roberts 1972.)

The message can also become distorted during the transfer by irrelevant factors. In communication process these external distractions are called noise. Noise can be for example sights, sounds, feeling tired, or daydreaming – anything that interferes with understanding. Basically all opportunities for conversation are opportunities for misunderstandings, and therefore the role of feedback can not be underestimated. Two-way feedback reveals the level of mutual understanding. As professor Wiio (1997, 224) has stated: *communication usually fails, except by accident.*

3.2 The concept of organisational communication

From a business perspective, effective communication is an absolute must, because it commonly accounts for the difference between success and failure or profit and loss. According to Wiio (1997, 162) organisational communication is a unifying element between different functions of the organisation.

The traditional model of communication is based on two beliefs. According to those beliefs information is neutral, and communication means transferring information from one place to another – from the sender to the receiver. In organisations this has usually meant draining the information from top to bottom; from managers to employees. However, in the knowledge-intensive organisations of the 21st century this traditional model can face problems. Communication is a link between people and information. Information flow from the employees to the executives provides timely reports about problems and reveals new opportunities. Without reciprocal communication with the employees the managers may lack important information about the company. (Juholin 2008, 58.)

The keywords of modern organisational communication are interaction, reciprocity, and mutual respect. Communication has become an important part of everyone's work and life in general. According to the new thinking, communication takes place where people are and work and where they produce and change information and experiences. The members of organisations are equal partners in communication; subordinates can question the decisions made by their superiors, and vice versa. Communication is no longer a separate function or series of activities, it has become an organic part of everything done in the work community. According to Juholin, organisational communication is the respiration and blood circulation of the organisation. (Juholin 2008, 61-64.)

Organisational communication can be analysed as a group of more or less settled ways of action, such as face-to-face conversations, companionships, internet-based discussions, or communications campaigns. All forms of communication can be evaluated based on how well they develop liable

ways of action and combine the stakeholders' views to administrating the organisation. (Kuvaja & Malmelin 2008, 90-91.)

Companies are a part of a network of organisations that operate in the society interacting with other organisations. Responsible business operations are all about the cooperation between organisational communication and all other business activities. The dialogue in organisational communication is highly affected by the attitudes of different parties. Responsibility is built by open and functional relationships with the stakeholders and active communication. Responsible communication is not done for the purpose of communication itself; it listens to the other parties' interests and expectations and makes good use of them in decision making. (Kuvaja & Malmelin 2008, 181-182.)

According to a recent study by Stephen Chong (2009), we spend during an average working day 75-90 percent of our time communicating; writing, reading, speaking and listening. Effective communication's importance can't therefore be underestimated, and communication skills need to be continuously developed and enhanced. It is absolutely essential for the companies to understand the necessity of effective communication at the workplace. Without open, clear and shared communication the company will lack continuity and direction. Ambiguity and uncertainty drive fear and create unnecessary tension. It is very important for the managers and the employees to communicate honestly and effectively, and keep the lines of communication open at all times. (Chong 2009.)

Communication is an everyday phenomenon; we all communicate with each other constantly. Organisational communication is the same phenomenon, i.e. exchanging messages, but existing in organisations between departments and on individual level. No matter what form and which channel of communication is used, the basic elements of coding and decoding the message are always included. Organisational communication's is social interaction in the context of an organization, aiming at delivering information and creating commitment. Failure or success in organisational

communication can and will affect the profitability and overall success of the company.

3.3 Internal communication channels

Internal communication channel refers to the media used in delivering the message within the organisation. Internal communication channels can be divided into three groups: written communication, face-to-face communication, and utilisation of electronic media (Åberg 1997, 102). Written communication channels in a company can include for instance newsletters, brochures, posters, circulars, memos, and fact sheets. Face-to-face communication consists e.g. of meetings, conversations (both formal and informal), info sessions, presentations and speeches, conferences, and grapevine. Electronic media as a communication channel contains for example e-mail, intranet, voice mail, instant messaging, webcasts, blogs, internet, electronic databases, and telephone.

Each medium has its strengths and weaknesses. A good communication strategy uses the media correspondingly to guarantee the information flow from top to bottom and vice versa. It is recommended to all companies to use multiple communication channels when communicating with internal audiences. In order to deliver appropriate information effectively different channels should be used with different employee segments. The message can be tailored according to what is comfortable to the audience, and so can the media. (Smith 2005, 74.)

3.4 Intranet as a communication channel

Intranet is like a private version of the internet, they are both built from the same concepts and technologies. The audience of the company intranet is a known entity as intranets are user specific; the access always requires some form of authorising. Thereby communicating through intranet gives you the advantage of knowing your audience; the users are the employees of the company and familiarity with the intranet site is usually rather high. The

content of the intranet can be very broad going deep on the topics and using a wide range of formats to facilitate communication and learning. Intranet sites are designed to assist quick content identification and retrieval and support long-term use among the employees. (Guenther 2007.)

Intranet is not just a tool, it is a channel. It beats all traditional internal communication channels by being fast, diversified, and bidirectional. Intranet is one of the best channels to use in the management of change. With and through the intranet companies become more transparent by bringing the information within everyone's reach. Though today it is not enough that the information is available, it needs to be personalised. Intranet is competing with all other media for people's attention. Only those contents that are considered important and personal are noticed and received. In all the time more internationalising business, intranet is the most important channel that enables the company strategy to flow similarly and to the same effect everywhere within the organisation. (Kuivalahti & Luukkonen 2003, 39-49.)

However, intranet should not be used as the only communication channel. Despite being fast and effective, intranet has also its weaknesses. Screen-based media are not as easy to read as printed publications. Especially older people and the ones having problems with sight often have difficulties reading on the screen. (Smith 2005, 80.) The older employees may also have negative assumptions about computer-based communications. If the attitude towards the communication channel is negative, it easily affects the message too. Another problem may be computer illiteracy, especially among the older generation. Usually the younger generation uses fluently electronic media but even that should not be considered axiomatic. It is important to use several communication channels to make sure the message will reach each employee.

3.5 The importance of communicating the strategy

The communication of the strategy basically means communicating the company's strategy to the stakeholders, i.e. facilitating the strategy process

including strategy development and implementation. A new strategy requires the whole organisation to change in some way, and effective communication of the strategy helps everyone to understand the nature of those changes and their own role in implementing the strategy. (Barker & Angelopulo, 2006, 34.)

The main objective of communicating the strategy is to enable the understanding and internalising of the strategy by delivering information. People who have been involved in developing the strategy understand it in a totally different way than external viewers. This causes a demand for communicating the strategy in several ways, yet remembering that the message should stay unchanged for everyone. Communication is based on an assumption that the sender and the receiver understand the message differently. Therefore just passing the information about the strategy is not enough; two-way communication is needed. (Kamensky 2002, 276.)

All employees must understand the strategy of the company, and they have to be willing to help the company to succeed with that strategy. It is vitally important for successful implementation of the strategy to make different units and the personnel to function according to the strategy. Frontline employee is the key to successful strategy execution. (Kaplan & Norton 2008, 27,184.) There is also an ethical view to the communication of the strategy. Strategy is such a fundamental issue concerning the whole organisation that each employee should have a right to know at least the basic elements of it. However, usually it is enough to understand the main lines of the overall strategy and in more detail how it will show in practice in work. (Hämäläinen & Maula 2004, 31-32.)

Employees who understand the strategy are able to make better decisions in their everyday work to support the company's vision. Not even the best strategic plans will be successful if they are not communicated effectively to the employees - the people who implement those plans. Vince Lombardi, a strategic thinker and former sports coach has said "Plan your work and work your plan", meaning the two key fundamentals of a good strategy; planning and execution. The third fundamental is communication. In sports the

players need to communicate and work together as a team – this can easily be applied to business life as well. (Laban & Green 2003.)

3.6 The communication of the strategy at Halton

In traditional communication models employees are seen as passive recipients, and the objective is to make them understand the information correctly. At Halton the strategy is communicated *with* the employees, not *to* them. Employees understand the message personally relevant and pay more attention to it when they are considered equal partners in communication rather than just recipients. At Halton each member of the staff is taking part in developing the strategy at their own level, concerning their own work. They are discussing the strategy interactively with their colleagues and supervisors, and selecting issues that are relevant to their work. That gives everyone a feeling of being important to the company's overall success, and clarifies how they can have influence on it with their own actions. It also creates a more positive environment and attitude, and makes the strategy a part of everyone's daily work instead of being only management's froth. Giving responsibility to the employees also strengthens their position as a company asset.

Halton uses several channels for communicating their new strategy. Strategy events where top management presents the strategy to all employees from corporate and SBA views are the starting point. Open discussion is encouraged and atmosphere is kept as informal as possible. A good example of innovative means of sharing information is in my opinion the Halton Alias, a game developed at Halton. In order to lighten the feel and clarify the concepts relevant to the company Halton Alias is played in small groups. Employees have a lot of fun explaining strategy words to their co-workers, and I have the feeling that the word strategy has become less distant to everyone. When everyone is familiar with the new strategy from the corporate point of view, employees plan a strategy of their own with their teams. These strategy deals are the guidelines that will lead the teams in realising the company's future goals.

With the help of E-learning modules the employees are given an opportunity to go through the whole strategy on their own. Reading about the strategy, answering questions, and taking quizzes reinforces the message and its understanding. The web courses are available in the Internet, and people have a chance to go back to them as many times as they want.

Strategy portal in the intranet is now available for the employees constantly. There they can find all the relevant information about the new strategy, and the latest news about its implementation. Intranet supports other Halton's communication channels and offers an electronic database for global use.

The more traditional communication channels are not forgotten either. Employees across all sectors often value face-to-face communication the most. The atmosphere at Halton is relatively open and relaxed and people have lively discussions with their co-workers and supervisors. Strategy is communicated especially on team levels through conversations and reciprocal feedback. Written communication supports other media by for example printed newsletters that are delivered to each workshop regularly. Halton's strategy communication is a mix of clear and understandable messages delivered through different channels aiming at mutual understanding of the company's visions.

4 INTERNAL MARKETING

4.1 The internal marketing concept

Internal marketing was first introduced over 20 years ago to solve the problem of delivering constantly high service quality (Rafiq & Ahmed 2000). According to Berry & Parasuraman (1991, 151) the basic idea of internal marketing is to treat the employees as customers, and to create jobs that fulfil the human needs. It is a good starting point for understanding internal marketing to view the jobs as internal products that are offered to the employees. In order to have satisfied customers a company needs employees who are motivated and satisfied with their jobs. Internal marketing aims to increase satisfaction among the employees by delivering them benefits and motivating them to become more customer conscious. The more satisfied the employees are the more satisfied will also the customers be.

However, this definition is not extensive enough to fully determine the concept of internal marketing. It also contains contradictions that may cause confusion – if employees are treated as customers, which customers are more important; internal or external? Rafiq and Ahmed (1995) highlight some other potential problems with this type of definition; unlike external customers of the company the employees don't usually have a choice with the "product sold" to them, it might even be unwanted. Rafiq and Ahmed also state that keeping the employees satisfied can cause the company significant financial costs. Therefore they suggest that internal marketing needs a broader definition. According to them internal marketing involves a *planned effort to overcome organizational resistance to change and to align, motivate and integrate employees towards the effective implementation of corporate and functional strategies*. As strategies change in the course of time companies need to motivate their employees to implement the changes effectively – employees have a significant role in creating customer satisfaction but it is not pointed out in this broader definition of internal marketing. (Rafiq & Ahmed 1993, 32-51.)

The modern approach to internal marketing focuses on reducing internal conflicts and departmental isolation, and defeating resistance to change. It is applied to all types of companies nowadays, not solely to the service companies. In order to implement a strategy effectively internal conflicts must be conquered and internal communications improved. Internal marketing has become a tool that helps companies to better achieve their strategies. (Rafiq & Ahmed 2000.)

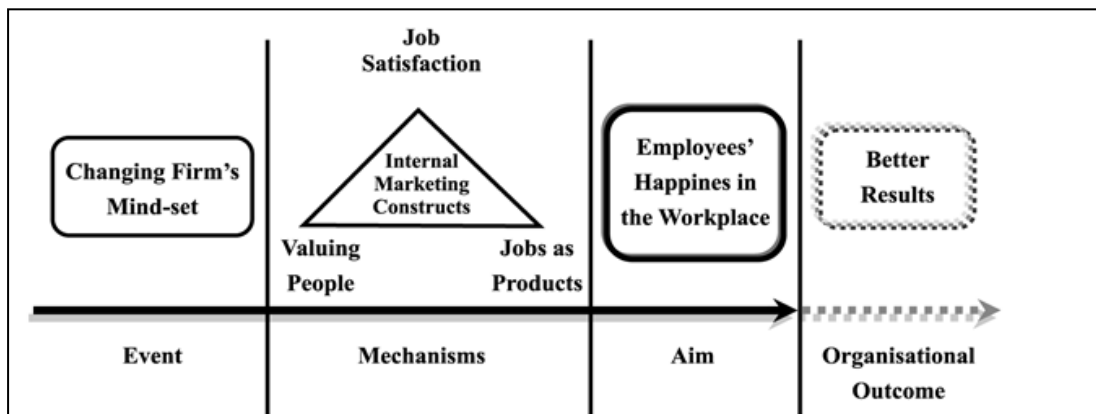


Figure 7 Building happiness in the workplace through internal marketing concept (Vasconcelos 2008)

Internal marketing can be used as a tool for creating job satisfaction. Work is one of the most important things in people's lives and people don't work merely for the reason of getting their living; work makes their life meaningful, gives them some challenge, and often offers them an important social network. Having control over your work and getting pleasure of doing it well is an essential element of job satisfaction. According to Vasconcelos (2008) there are strong evidences showing that caring about employees creates and increases job satisfaction – people value the companies that put effort to the employees' wellbeing at workplace. Employers should not neglect employees' opinions and expectations if they want to keep their workforce loyal and happy. Employees are a crucial factor to the company's success, and consequently internal marketing is not a matter of choosing employees over customers; it is concentrating on them because of the customers. If internal marketing is composed of valuing the employees and considering the jobs as the products offered to them it creates higher job satisfaction, which in turn generates better results for the whole company, as shown in

Figure 7. Christopher, Payne & Ballantyne (2002, 12) define internal marketing as creating, developing, and maintaining an internal service culture that supports the company in achieving its goals.

4.2 Multi-level model of internal marketing

Rafiq and Ahmed introduced a multi-level model of internal marketing in 1995. The model explains how marketing techniques and tools can be used internally in creating commitment and making strategy implementation more effective. It uses a broader view of marketing mix than the traditional 4Ps framework. The model has three strategic levels; direction, path, and action, as illustrated in figure 8.

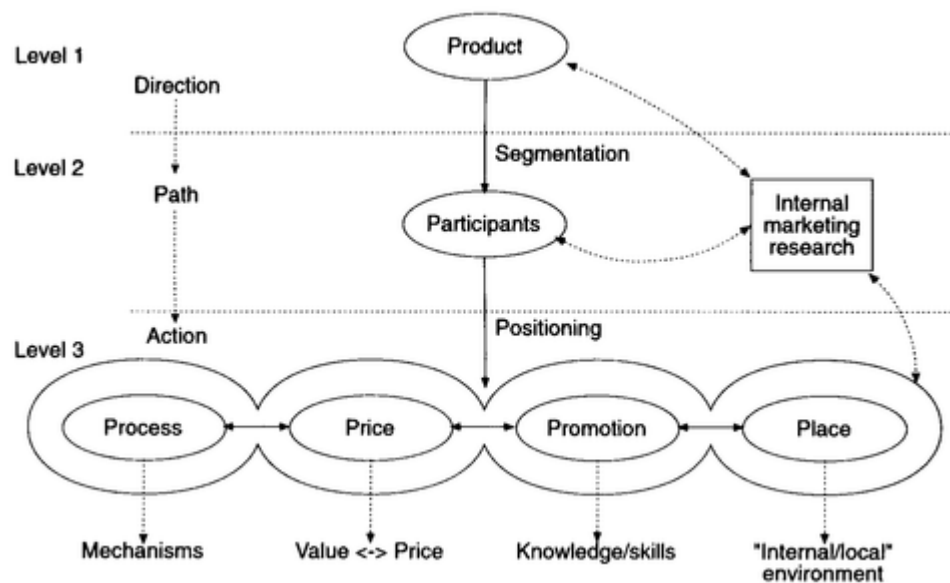


Figure 8 Multi-level model of internal marketing (Rafiq & Ahmed 1995)

At level 1 the product is specified. In internal context product is the required change; it can be intangible such as a change in attitudes of employees or more tangible like a change in production activities. Basically the product can be any change required in implementing a particular corporate or functional strategy. However, the product can not be determined single-handedly from the management's point of view. The needs and

requirements of the employees must be taken into account in order to achieve effective and efficient implementation. (Rafiq & Ahmed 1995.)

On the second level the participants are segmented into groups with similar needs. The needs of internal markets are identified by e.g. satisfaction surveys. Finding out the possible fears, resistance, and attitudes towards the change is needed for grouping the employees on the basis of their needs. Based on this internal segmentation different activities are created directing different segments. Respecting employee differences enhances the message. (Rafiq & Ahmed 1995.)

Internal positioning is done at the third stage creating a strategic package of actions to fulfil the employee needs and to conquer the identified barriers. Providing a mix of benefits to specific employees will motivate them to achieve effective implementing of the strategy. It is notable that strategy implementation requires a planned set of activities that creates costs – if the right actions are chosen the benefits will yet overcome the costs. (Rafiq & Ahmed 1995.)

Process includes in this model issues like resources and authority. It defines the type of involvement e.g. concerning meetings. Price is not seen as plain cost; instead it refers to the balance between value and cost to the individual employee and the company. For example the change may require working harder or learning new things, but at the same time it may enable a chance to access bonuses. The benefit achieved can be as simple as enhancing one's professional skills. Promotional activities are used in selling the change to the employees. In this sense promotion is a function that generates knowledge by means of internal advertising. Presentations, trainings, and other forms of internal communications are used in raising awareness and strengthening the skills of the labour force. The objective of place element is to formulate an internal environment that is supporting the achievement of corporate goals by e.g. giving better support, empowering employees, and fine-tuning organisational culture. (Rafiq & Ahmed 1995.)

4.3 Learning organisations

Learning organisation shows organisational capacity for change involving common participation of the employees in decision making. Learning can't be avoided in any organisation, but learning organisations do it consciously. Learning organisations have a strong shared vision which pulls the whole organisation together. Therefore the vision and the values need to be such that all employees can and will share them. All relevant knowledge must be shared with the entire organisation, and employees should be trained not only for their tasks in the company but also for being a part of the company. Employee empowerment leads to learning organisations, and that is a necessary step in performing internal marketing correctly. Learning organisation is a tool for getting the company to serve the customers better and with better understanding. (Cahill 1995.)

Learning organisations believe in rich and productive conversations and collaborative actions. They are more productive and more adaptive than traditional organisations, because people are more capable to understand the interdependencies of even complex issues. Openness, commitment, and the ability to deal with complexity are fundamental features of learning organisations' employees. Developing such capabilities in the organisation requires patience, courage, and vision. Leaders of learning organisations are the ones that show the way to others, they build the new organisation and its capabilities. Leadership in learning organisations is collective because building a learning organisation is not an individual task. It requires changing the ways of thinking and interacting in the whole organisation. (Kofman & Senge 1993.)

Learning organisations focus on understanding and satisfying customer needs by creating new products and services and ways of doing business. That creates greater outcomes in forms of customer retention, business growth, and profitability. Critical components of learning organisation consist of market orientation, entrepreneurial values, facilitative leadership, organic structure, and decentralised strategic planning. Learning organisations' knowledge comes from experience, experimentation, and information from

several sources, and they are outstanding in their ability to foresee opportunities in unstable markets. (Slater 1995.)

4.4 Internal marketing at Halton

The whole Halton organisation is very close to the market model. The company has decentralised structure that consist of several different units. Each unit plans their own strategy, works independently with their own customers and suppliers, and acts like a separate company in general. The units have freedom to manage their operations according to what is best for them. They also cooperate often by offering their experience and organising joint ventures. Halton's units are considered internal enterprises, but they all represent "one Halton" with similar goals and shared future visions.

At Halton employees are seen as a significant asset of the company. In many ways they are treated as customers; their opinions matter and their satisfaction is an important part of the company strategy. Employees are physically taken care of by offering them inter-company health clinic services, sporty activities (e.g. in house gym and leisure activities), a weekly possibility for massage at the workplace (company pays half of the price), and so on. Also events and trips are organised on a yearly basis for the employees and their families. As a family-owned company Halton has high family values, and maybe due to that there are many families that work together at Halton (both parents full time and teenaged children as summer help). One of Halton's goals is to create an environment in which people can maintain commitment and motivation and be productive and happy in their work. Halton has succeeded in delivering that message throughout the company. Everyone working for the company is considered "Haltonese", like a member of the family. A strong we-spirit unites all employees, and the atmosphere is quite unique. The people at Halton make you feel welcome and an important part of the company even if you are only a temporary trainee. The company treats its employees well and in exchange it gets employees cooperation and reduces the possibility of conflicts.

Information is shared transparently throughout the company which helps to create commitment among the employees. Regular team briefings are held and company news are shared with all employees. Intranet is a huge data base of information that is within everyone's reach. Obviously the production employees can't use computers while working, so the main news and topics are also shown on info screens at the factory. Employee empowerment shows in everyday work, people are given responsibility and encouraged to create development ideas concerning their own work. Constant development of employees' skills is considered important, and they are offered training whenever needed. For example those employees who deal with Russian truck drivers in logistics team take Russian lessons at work once a week. Skilled work force is one of Halton's main resources. Halton has a strong shared vision which pulls the whole company together. Job satisfaction is relatively high, and it shows outwards to the customers and other stakeholders.

5 HALTON'S PORTAL FOR STRATEGY

5.1 Background and planning

Halton had launched their new strategy, Halton in 2015, in spring 2009. The process of communicating the strategy had started by strategy kick-off events organised at the same time in all Halton locations. Feedback was good, but these events hadn't reached the production workers. New local events were planned, this time especially targeting the employees in production. The new strategy was communicated with the employees on many levels, and the product of this thesis is one part of that communication.

When starting the specialisation training at Halton in April 2009, most of the work consisted of dealing with the new strategy. The local strategy day arrangements in Kausala as well as the organising of the strategy training for the whole Kausala production staff were an essential part of the training. Being responsible of new and challenging tasks related to the strategy communication process supported the understanding of the need for communicating the strategy on several levels. Creating the portal for strategy solved a problem of bringing the information globally available.

The first thing to do was to get acquainted with Halton's strategy. In order to be able to communicate the strategy to the employees effectively, it was necessary to fully understand what it was all about. It was probably a good idea to give this task to someone from outside the company, because not a single issue in the strategy was self-explanatory for an outsider. If it was found understandable and clear, most probably also the employees would understand the message.

The company had created two e-learning modules for the employees (appendix 1). The first one, Enabling Wellbeing, was designed to help the employees understand what kind of company Halton Group is. It goes through the company's history, its future expectations, the customers, and how Halton differs from the competition. The second module, Strategy 2015, is obviously about the new strategy. It explains what is changing and why,

and what kind of effect it will have on the team and individual levels. Both modules include exercises, a quiz, and a feedback form to make learning more interactive. These online courses are available in four language versions; Finnish, English, French, and German. They are meant for all Halton's employees globally and available in the internet for everyone with Halton's username and password.

These e-learning modules were of great help during the portal designing phase, as there was all the relevant information about the strategy. Going through both web courses in Finnish and in English assured the use of correct vocabulary in the intranet pages and strengthened the understanding of the relevant concepts. All the way through the process it was easy to come back to the modules for checking any details.

In the intranet there were also webcast videos from the global strategy kick-off event. Unfortunately there wasn't enough time to go through all of them as they were rather long. The video clips of most interest from the portal point of view, all the presentation files, and the strategy deals made so far were used as material of which the contents of the portal was formed.

The Brand and Communications Manager of the company was supervising the work and giving suggestions and feedback in general. The company's objectives for the portal and the whole strategy implementation process were discussed together before making a draft of the contents of the portal.

The work continued with strategy communication on other areas than the portal too. The e-learning modules had been used so far mainly by the managers and clerical employees. Training sessions for all production employees of Kausala factories were organised in small groups during two weeks of time. Being responsible of all the arrangements gave good experience of internal communication and its requirements. In the factory the staff had only a few computers available and a limited amount of time to use on anything other than their basic tasks. Therefore everyone was given a chance to complete the web courses in the training room with provided assistance. Each employee went through the modules individually, and if

they had any problems with the computers or any questions to ask there was help available. From the thesis point of view this provided a great opportunity to get to know the employees better and gave access to the inside information. Training sessions were rather informal and people shared their opinions about the strategy quite freely. Knowing how the employees felt about it helped very much in designing the strategy portal.

5.2 Designing and creating the portal for strategy

The personal starting point to this project was to get familiar with intranet administration. Experience of creating web pages wasn't required, but the lack of it meant more background work. Learning to master for example the routines of creating pages and bulletins in the intranet took some time. Later on it was found out that there was a Webmasters' Guide available but by mistake it hadn't been given to me. Luckily Halton's intranet is very clear to use and it was quite easy to learn to administer it. The technical details of the intranet are not commented much in this thesis, as expertise in IT field is not an essential part of the work.

When creating intranet pages, there are several things needed to be taken into account in layout and design, such as the amount of pages and subpages, the clearness and practicality of the navigation, attached files, image resolution and size, headings, fonts, backgrounds, the amount of columns per page, and hyperlinks. Of course the content is the most important issue that requires a great deal of planning and designing beforehand.

The work started with designing the content. There was plenty of ready-made material available, and a similar structure and content to the one in the e-learning modules were chosen for the portal. It was found very clear to understand, and using the same images and headlines as in the training that everyone had taken part into gave the strategy portal a sense of familiarity. As the objective of the portal was to repeat and reinforce the information already gained through other channels, the best solution was to use the same material. That didn't leave much room for being creative, but on the

other hand designing something totally new would have required more knowledge about the topic.

The objective was to create the portal to the local intranet in Finnish and to the Halton Group's global intranet in English. In addition to that the work included developing the French intranet portal in cooperation with the French colleagues. The Finnish version was created first and then the structure was copied to other intranets. No major alterations to the contents were needed; basically the only differences between the different language versions were some country specific file attachments.

A draft of pages needed to be created first. The main page of the portal was titled *Halton in 2015*. The word strategy was intentionally left out because it may sound alienating to some employees. Halton in 2015 as a page title creates a clear image of the topic: creating together the future of our company. After the structure was clear and functional it was time to modify the pages by adding text and images. Under the main page were created eight sub pages that each had their own sub pages and links to file attachments. Figure 9 shows an example of intranet pages' structure, content pages are listed and numbered according to their position, indents showing the sub pages.

Sulatto CMS

Front page Halton INTRA - www content

Administration

- Setup
 - General
 - Layout images
 - Keywords
 - Localization
- Content
 - Pages
 - News
 - Files and images
- Image Library
 - Images
 - New Image
 - Setup
- Discussion area
 - By category
 - By date
- Other
 - Create page
 - Create bulletin

Newsletter admin

Content pages

[Pages](#) | [Archived](#) | [URL shortnames](#) | [Delete selected](#)

Page title	Created	Modified	Delete
Home page	17.08.2006	02.10.2008	<input type="checkbox"/>
10 Halton Guide...	22.03.2007	24.09.2008	<input type="checkbox"/>
1 Mission & Vision	29.11.2007	06.10.2008	<input type="checkbox"/>
10 Strategy 2015	29.11.2007	23.09.2008	<input type="checkbox"/>
20 Financial Key Figures...	16.02.2007	23.09.2008	<input type="checkbox"/>
10 Trimester Results...	23.09.2008	23.09.2008	<input type="checkbox"/>
20 Second Trimester	23.09.2008	05.10.2008	<input type="checkbox"/>
30 First Trimester	23.09.2008	05.10.2008	<input type="checkbox"/>
20 Annual Results...	21.09.2008	07.10.2008	<input type="checkbox"/>
8 2007	07.10.2008	07.10.2008	<input type="checkbox"/>
9 2006	07.10.2008	07.10.2008	<input type="checkbox"/>
10 2005	21.09.2008	05.10.2008	<input type="checkbox"/>
20 2004	22.09.2008	05.10.2008	<input type="checkbox"/>
30 2003	22.09.2008	05.10.2008	<input type="checkbox"/>
40 2002	22.09.2008	05.10.2008	<input type="checkbox"/>
50 2001	22.09.2008	05.10.2008	<input type="checkbox"/>
60 2000	23.09.2008	05.10.2008	<input type="checkbox"/>
70 1999	23.09.2008	05.10.2008	<input type="checkbox"/>
30 Webcasts...	02.07.2008	23.09.2008	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 September 2008	23.09.2008	05.10.2008	<input type="checkbox"/>
10 June 2008	02.09.2008	05.10.2008	<input type="checkbox"/>
40 Organisation...	04.07.2008	05.10.2008	<input type="checkbox"/>
10 Halton Group	23.09.2008	05.10.2008	<input type="checkbox"/>
20 SBAs	04.07.2008	03.10.2008	<input type="checkbox"/>

Figure 9 Halton Group intranet admin page (Halton 2009e.)

Things to consider while creating new pages were for example page titles, in which order the pages will appear, URL shortnames, whether the page will be a regular page or a hyperlink to some other page, categorisation of the pages, title texts for images, and the use of ingress text at the top of the page. The content page of Halton's intranet for creating new pages can be seen in Appendix 2.

During the process several online negotiations were held with the Brand and Communications Manager. Suggestions for improvement and feedback in general were given on a regular basis. The final approval for publishing the pages was given after the content and layout were approved. The main page of the portal, Halton in 2015, can be found in Appendix 3. Several other functions were planned to be added on the pages, but unfortunately there wasn't enough time to implement all plans. Also some technical problems were causing delays on the work, for example a video link couldn't be added on the main page of the strategy portal because some technical features of the intranet didn't support video files yet. As it was summer and the system administrators were on holiday, adding the videos was left to the persons who would continue developing the pages later on. Originally it was planned

was to add a blog about the strategy to the site, and some imaginary news from the future to catch people's attention. At the time the work had to be finished it hadn't been decided yet who would be writing the blog and the news had not been invented, and therefore these more humorous and personal features of the strategy had to be left out for the moment.

5.3 Evaluating the work process

According to the feedback received, the work contribution was highly appreciated. The strategy portal came in useful, and though it didn't include everything that had been planned originally, it filled the need and reached its objectives. All the relevant information was now available for everyone. The most time consuming work creating the pages had been done, and it was now easy for others to continue developing them. The process of communicating the strategy had just started and face-to-face communication was still the main means of sharing the ideas and reaching everyone's attention. Intranet was supporting other forms of communication instead of being a primary channel for sharing information. The portal for strategy has, however, huge potential to increase its importance. At its best the portal can serve as a function that awakens advanced discussions, creates interest, and raises new questions and ideas. Adding more interactive operations and eye-catching bulletins to the portal would make it more inviting to use.

Personally I liked the work a lot. Learning something new every day and developing the intranet was a lot more interesting and fun than I had thought beforehand. Time literally flew while working on the strategy pages; the work was almost addictive. Time was, however, a bit problematic as there were so many other things to do simultaneously. There wasn't quite as much time for fine tuning the portal as would have been needed to make it as good as was planned. Therefore it would have been useful to continue a bit longer with the project in order to achieve the best results. In general the portal became quite good, but it could have been more eye-catching.

Another thing causing frustration was the many-sidedness of the project. The pages and contents were first created to the local Finnish intranet, and

then everything was translated to the Group intranet in English. On the English pages there was always something that could be added to make it better, or some visual effects were added for improving the appearance – and of course the same changes needed to be made to the Finnish intranet. This started a vicious cycle where changes were made to both intranets in turn. The longer time was spent adjusting details the more new ideas emerged and in the end there wasn't enough time to realise all of them.

However, the results were good and the users were satisfied. The strategy pages were at a good starting stage for further development. The personal learning objectives set for the work had been also reached; the project was found highly beneficial from learning point of view. It was a good idea to create a path from both practical training periods to the Bachelor's Thesis within the same company. Having work experience from a longer period of time was very useful when dealing with the thesis. Also for the company it was very convenient to have the same trainee on several projects – it created trust and made it possible to plan things well beforehand.

6 CONCLUSIONS

There are several views to strategy; some definitions are future oriented, some definitions see the strategy as a pattern in previous actions, and some consider the strategy as an ongoing stream of activity. In each case strategies are made consciously and in advance, based on rational analyses of the company, its business, and future expectations. Companies set direction for themselves by creating strategies.

Competition is always somehow involved when strategies are discussed. Porter's theory has an outside-in type of view to strategy; it is based on factors outside the organisation. According to him strategy work is done in order to succeed in the competition for a greater market share. Resource based views to strategy concentrate on internal competition; competing in developing the core capabilities within the organisation. This is an inside-out view to the strategy, which is based on the resources of the organisation. The core capabilities and internal knowledge are seen as the essential sources for creating competitive advantage and guiding the strategy formulation.

The world changes fast, and the competition becomes tougher all the time. Also strategies seem to go out of date faster than before. Product and strategy life cycles become shorter whereas knowledge and competence life cycles become longer. Companies need to be able to foresee the fast changing trends and respond to the fast shifting attitudes and customer needs.

It is not enough to set corporate level strategies. Strategies on functional levels are the ones that can make a difference and create competitive advantage. The effectiveness of corporate and business strategies depends on how well all functional groups work together. Getting better results through new strategies can be achieved only by collective efforts of all organisational units. Strategy can create a common goal when the decision making is shared throughout the company; each unit/team/employee works on different activities and should have a right to be involved. Change is never easy, but if people are not heading to the same direction the result is

getting nowhere. Motivating the employees and creating an organisational culture that supports employee empowerment is a starting point for successful strategies.

In order to promote successful strategy implementation companies should focus not only on developing a sound strategy but also on creating employee commitment to the strategy – successful strategy implementation requires the input and commitment of all employees. This can be achieved through effective and reliable two-ways communication which uses several communication channels and is directed at different employee segments according to their interests and understanding. Employee empowerment is a key to commitment. If that is not understood by the high level management the strategy is very likely to flop.

Top-down management often fails to utilise the tacit knowledge that lies in the workforce. The knowledge held by the employees is a major asset and the most valuable resource companies have. The concept of internal markets repositions the source of knowledge from top to bottom providing to employees more entrepreneurial freedom to affect the future of the company they are devoting their lives to. This can lead to substantially high results in the overall profitability and success of the company. When talking about strategies, internal marketing is a key element to successful implementation of new schemes.

Halton's strategy is strongly based on the core capabilities of the company. Good relationships with customers and long term partnerships are based on deep understanding and mutual trust. The commitment and passion to add value through innovations and productivity are shared throughout the company – the Haltonese are enabling wellbeing in indoor environments. One of Halton's main goals is to be easy to do business with. People make Halton what it is today and what it will be in the future, and therefore employee empowerment is one of the corner stones of the new strategy. Halton's aim to create an environment where people can maintain commitment and motivation is supported by internal marketing and effective two-way communications.

Several communication channels are used at Halton to ensure equal receiving and acceptance of the message. Halton's internal communication is more than delivering information from top to bottom; it is sharing the knowledge on all levels. Corporate strategy has been formulated on top management level, and several innovative methods and channels are used for creating a common understanding of the overall goals and plans for the company future. Functional strategies are created by the people who are implementing those strategies, and everyone is involved in the process. Strategy deals on team levels are used as the guidelines that lead each employee in realising Halton's future goals. Communicating the new strategy is not bound to formal events or briefings, it is an everyday matter and discussed regardless of time and place.

The portal is an important part of Halton's communication of the strategy, but it is not a primary channel for sharing information. Especially when the new strategy was launched, intranet served as a supportive means of communication. Face-to-face methods were used for reaching people's attention and creating positive attitude towards the strategy. Intranet pages supported the process of internalising the core ideas as all the material was available for everyone for closer examination whenever they felt like it. Later on when people become more familiar with the new strategy, the importance of the portal grows. All the news and other relevant information can be found conveniently in the same location. At its best the portal can serve as a function that awakens advanced discussions, creates interest, and raises new questions and ideas.

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Halton

Enabling Wellbeing


Welcome

This e-learning module is designed to help you to understand what kind of company Halton Group is; what we offer, who our clients are, and how we differ from competitors now and in the future.

We also go through the main milestones of the company's history, because to be able to understand the present and the future, it is necessary to understand the past.

The module also includes some exercises and a quiz to help you remember the module's main points.

This module will take about 40 minutes of your time. Enjoy learning!



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Halton

Strategy 2015


Welcome

This e-learning module is designed to help you understand Halton's new strategy. After completing the module, you will be aware of what is changing – both from the group and from the Strategic Business Area (SBA) point of view. You will also know how the strategy creation process proceeds from the Halton Group level to the team and individual levels.

As you go through the module, please pay attention to these questions in particular:

- Why do we need the change?
- What is the new Halton like?
- What actions are needed to reach the goals?

This module will take about 50 minutes of your time. Enjoy the learning!



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Content page

Status:	<input type="radio"/> Draft <input checked="" type="radio"/> Published <input type="radio"/> Archived
Page title: [*]	<input type="text" value="Halton Indoors"/>
Order: [*]	<input type="text" value="40"/>
URL shortname:	<input type="text"/> <input type="button" value="Check shortname"/>
Page counter:	<input type="radio"/> Off <input checked="" type="radio"/> On
Page type:	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Regular page <input type="radio"/> Hyperlink to another page or address
CATEGORIZATION	
Show in navigation:	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
	<input type="checkbox"/> Home page <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Show sub pages
Subcategory 1:	<input type="text" value="Marketing and Sales Material"/>
Subcategory 2:	<input type="text" value="Choose"/>
PAGE IMAGE	
Main image:	<input type="text" value="Choose"/> About us briefly About us business areas About us careers open application About us careers open positions
Alt text for main image:	<input type="text"/>
Title text for image:	<input type="text" value="HALTON INDOORS MARKETING AND SALES MATE"/>
Text:	<input type="text" value="All marketing material and sales tools for Halton Indoors can be found in this section"/>
ATTACHMENT FILES	
Files:	<input type="button" value="Add a file"/>

Halton Intranet - Halton in 2015 - Microsoft Internet Explorer

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Address <http://intranet.halton.fi/Halton/Intra/cms.nsf/Id/Haltonin2015>

Local intranets Search site

Home HALTON GROUP WEB SITE

Halton

Halton in 2015

- New mission
- Halton vision elements for 2015 »
- How we are different
- Organisational structure »
- Actions for reaching the goals »
- Online training
- Strategy 2015 material
- Strategy Deals
- [Halton Guide](#)
- [Halton Locations](#)
- [Human Resources](#)
- [Accounting & Finance](#)
- [Information Technology](#)
- [Marketing and Sales](#)
- [Material](#)
- [Business Areas](#)
- [Halton Shop](#)

HALTON IN 2015 - WHAT WILL CHANGE AND WHICH ARE OUR GOALS?

Halton in 2015 site is where you will find the main points, goals, materials, and coming events of the new Halton 2015 strategy.

Halton's new mission

The Halton Group mission will be changed in conjunction with the new strategy. Our new mission is:

We enable wellbeing in indoor environments!

Compared to the previous this means that we will expand our scope from indoor air to indoor environments, energy-efficiency, and safety.

Halton's promise in 15 seconds

Halton is passionate about indoor environments.

We offer business-enhancing products, systems, and services for comfortable, energy-efficient, and safe environments to customers who value people's wellbeing.

Halton is involved from target-setting to facility use and focuses on creating positive indoor environment experiences for people.

Halton in 2015 materials and events

- Goals i.e. so called vision elements for 2015
- Actions for reaching the goals
 - Strategy deals of the teams
- How do we differ from the competition
- Halton in 2015 material
 - Online trainings
 - Strategy presentations
- Coming events

Tuesday
14 July 2009
» Change time zone

Phone book
» Advanced search » Print phone book

Halton locations
Choose

Toolbox
Choose

Discussion areas
Choose

Search the web
Google